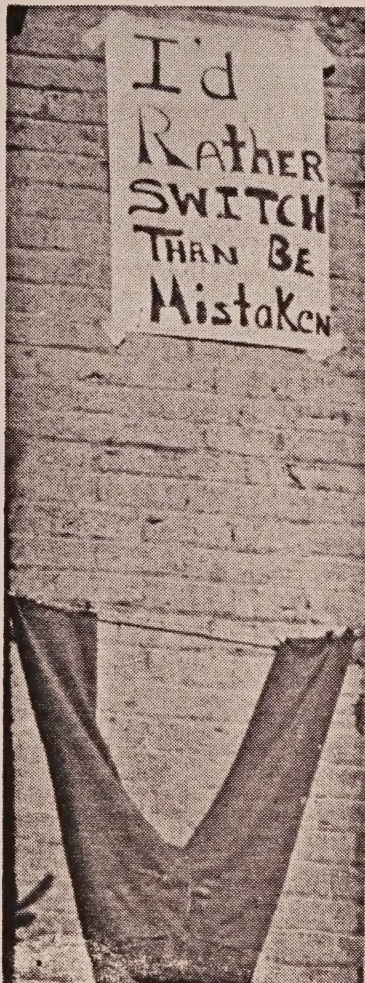




Staff photos by Joseph Thomas

Southeastern Gay Conference

While a sign at the Union welcomed the gays, a sign on Old East Dorm (above, right) expressed one resident's feelings about "Gay Day" (specified as a day for all gays to wear blue jeans). The coexecutive director of the National Gay Task Force, Jean O'Leary (above, left) delivered the keynote address Saturday. Her speech dealt with gays and the Carter administration.



Gay conference hosted by CGA attracts 600

By LESLIE SCISM
Staff Writer

Gay-rights advocates said Saturday that momentum was growing for their movement despite efforts by TV personality Anita Bryant to block a gay-rights ordinance in Dade County, Fla.

"It would take an octopus to stop us now," said Jean O'Leary, coexecutive director of the three-and-a-half-year-old National Gay Task Force. O'Leary addressed a crowd of more than 600 persons from at least 15 states gathered at the Carolina Union this weekend for the second annual Southeastern Gay Conference, hosted by the Carolina Gay Association.

The gay-rights leader told the cheering and applauding crowd that she was optimistic about the future of the gay-rights movement during Jimmy Carter's administration.

"The atmosphere is vibrant; I feel the electricity," she said. "We rode in on the tail end of the civil-rights movement. We've made major inroads in all areas."

O'Leary's 45-minute speech was titled "Gays and the Carter Administration: the Movement of the 1980s," and focused on her March 26 meeting with Carter aide Margaret Costanza. O'Leary and 13 other gay-rights leaders discussed with Costanza discrimination against gays in prisons, the military, civil service jobs and housing. Subsequent meetings with specific agencies are planned for the future, but no dates have been set.

"It was a very concrete meeting," O'Leary said. "We're going to be a major, major civil-rights movement in the 1980s."

O'Leary, a former nun, said gay-rights organizations were doubling and tripling in membership and said membership would be higher if the social stigma of homosexuality were removed.

"Some of us are closeted, hiding," she said.

But she said she was optimistic about legislation on the local, state and federal levels. More than 40 municipalities have passed equal-rights ordinances, and 18 states

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gays

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have repealed sodomy laws that prohibit certain acts between consenting adults. A bill has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives that would amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include a provision outlawing discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. Another gay-rights bill to be introduced in the Senate would focus on equal rights in employment for gays.

"The House bill is ideal, but I don't expect to see it for quite a number of years," O'Leary said. "I don't think it will happen automatically."

But O'Leary said she did not think Anita Bryant's efforts would hinder the movement. Bryant, along with Coral Gables City Commissioner Robert Brake, organized a group known as "Save Our Children" to protest a law passed in January which banned jobs and housing discrimination against homosexuals. The group collected 64,300 signatures to oppose the law, which forced the commission either to repeal the two-month-old measure or call for a referendum. The commissioners voted 6-3 in favor of the referendum.



a celebration of the gay lifestyle

FRANK PORTER GRAHAM STUDENT UNION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA
APRIL 1, 2 & 3, 1977

Welcome to the second annual Southeastern Gay Conference. This gathering has been organized through the efforts of many groups and individuals; each deserves thanks and recognition for his/her/its work, but will not be listed separately: in addition to space considerations, we do not want to focus our attention on what has already been done and on the efforts of organization --- this is the SOUTH-EASTERN GAY CONFERENCE: it exists to bring gays from the whole region together to exchange information, ideas, support. The organizers have contributed the raw materials of the Conference- a place to meet, speakers, workshops, etc. The conference will only be successful, however, if each of you who attends contributes interest and energy to it.

Last year the conference was also held in Chapel Hill. We do not want the Conference to become tied to Chapel Hill; ideally, it should move around the southeastern region, allowing more people to participate in the to organize the conference. Plans for next year will be discussed at the feedback session on Sunday--please keep this in mind. A feed back sheet is included in this program. Please fill it out-- your comments/criticisms will help make the next Conference even better. The sheets should be returned to the box in the Great Hall.

Karen Paterson
Conference Coordinator

NAME TAG COLOR KEY: Green- conference organizers; Blue- major speakers; Orange- workshop facilitators and leaders; Brown- local residents; Black- out of town participants.

Pesach Seder Opportunities for Gay Jews

Saturday, 6:30 - Beth El Synagogue, Durham; \$3- seder, small meal.
Reservations, 942-4057, Hillel Foundation. Rides available upon request.

Sunday, 6:30 - Hillel Foundation, Chapel Hill; \$3. Reservations, 942-4057.

Other arrangements have also been made for Pesach. Please see the staff at the registration table for more details.

We would like to thank the following groups/businesses for their donations to the Conference: Triangle Area Lesbian Feminists, Durham; Gay Awareness in Perspective, Richmond; The Nickelodeon Lounge and Restaurant, Norfolk; Club Jacksonville Baths, Jacksonville, Fla.; Blueberry Hill, Durham; Capital Corral, Raleigh; Dignity/Integrity, Chapel Hill.

We would also like to thank the following agencies and businesses for their cooperation in putting on the Conference: The Barb, Atlanta; Southeastern Disco DJ's Association, Student Graphics, UNC-CH; Free Press, Charlotte; and the University News Bureau, Chapel Hill.

